1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

was said by Samuel to be interpreted:

186 "Let me not get into trouble with the government," but it is
782 probably much older than this interpretation would indicate,
805 and refers to the former dislike of the Todas to any inter-
193 course with people other than the Badagas and Kotas. "Twelve years" is a common expression for an indefinitely long time, and may be translated "for ever." The practice of combining positive and negative sentences as in this prayer is one which seems to be not uncommon in the Toda language. It will be noticed that several of the clauses are identical with those of the prayer ordinarily used in the dairy.

782 When the *pilinörtpol* has finished his prayer he rises, and
783 the *palikartmokh* takes up the *tuni* and the ring and puts
796 them in the dairy. Then the *pilinörtpol* and his companions
618 go into the outer room of the dairy and take food prepared by the dairyman, after which they go to a wood near Kiudr and stay there till after nightfall, when they make their way home, taking care not to be seen by anyone.

If the ring is given by one of the Kuudrol it becomes the property of the men of the other *kudr*, but as its value is very small, only from four annas to two rupees, it is not divided, but is usually taken by the man of the *kudr* who takes the chief part in the ceremony.

The ceremony as described above resembles those of *irnörtiti* and *tuninörtiti*, in that the offering is given by a man of one division of the clan to the members of the other division.

Pilinörtiti may also be undertaken by a man as an atonement for wrong-doing, and in the only case of the kind of which I know, the wrong-doer, although he belonged to the Kars clan of the Tartharol, had to make the offering to Kiudr. In this case there was no question of the ring passing from one *kudr* to another, and it probably became the property of the man connected with Kiudr who took the chief part in conducting the ceremony.

123 Various unfortunate events which occurred during my visit
753 to the Todas illustrate very well the working of the regula-
777 tions which have been described in this chapter. One of these misfortunes befell Kutadri, who went with me to visit the Kundahs, the headquarters of the Pan clan. Mr.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

Kuudr has already been given; the name of the Kars bow is *pulkiikkm* and that of Taradr *pursüdsk*. When the husband gives the bow and arrow to his wife, she raises it to her forehead and then, holding it in her right hand, turns to gaze at the lamp in the tree. She looks for an hour or until the lamp goes out, and then all present[1] go to the village for food, except the husband and wife. The man makes a fireplace, lights a fire and cooks jaggery and rice in a new pot, using only ghi, and not butter, to mix the rice, and while he is doing this his wife ties up certain kinds of food in a cloth and puts the bundle under the tree. This food includes rice, ragi, barley, wheat, the grain (?) called *kirsi* (see p. 266), some jaggery and salt. Some pieces of honeycomb are also placed on leaves, which are then thrown away. When the food cooked by the man is ready both husband and wife eat together.

Later the relatives return from the village and all pass the night in the wood, the relatives keeping at some distance from the married pair. At daybreak on the following day, the day of the new moon, all return to the village and feast, food being given to all visitors.

Several of those who have described this ceremony have included in the description an account of "tying the *tali*."[2] So far as I could ascertain nothing of the kind is done. I inquired into the point many times and all agreed that it formed no part of the Toda ceremony and that its equivalent was the giving of the bow and arrow. More than one man spoke of the *pursütpimi* ceremony as "tying the *tali*," but the latter expression is merely the equivalent of "marriage ceremony," and the very man who used this expression denied vehemently that tying the *tali* or anything else round

[1] According to a recent account given to me by Mr. Thurston, the people leave the spot about six o'clock in the evening. The time is determined by the opening of the flowers of *Mesembryanthemum tetraptera*, which is called by the Todas *ár mani pöv*, or six o'clock flower. This flower is a garden escape, so that this special practice must be recent, but it suggests that the general practice of telling the time of day by means of flowers may be an old Toda custom.

[2] Mr. Natesa Sastri (*Madras Mail*, August 28th, 1894) states that the bow and arrow are tied round the neck of the woman, so that they definitely take the place of the *tali*.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca 1901-02) 1906 Toda

It is perhaps significant that the number seven should be a sacred number to a people who have so highly developed the cult of different days of the week. It is possible that the purificatory drinkings of the ordination ceremonies were at one time performed seven times with the idea that the candidate was sanctifying himself for each day of the week, but at the present time it is clear that the act is performed seven times because this number is prescribed by custom. It would be interesting to ascertain whether the sanctity of the number seven occurs predominantly in the religious cults of peoples who have a seven-day week. 788 801

Nine.—This number only occurs in the dairy ceremonial during the ordination of the *palol* when the seven-fold purification with *tudr* is performed nine times.

Twelve.—I only met with this number once, in the prayer at the *pilinörtiti* ceremony, when the expression "12 years" is used as if it were equivalent to "for ever."

Sixteen and *Eighteen.*—The chief interest of these numbers is that they are used in connexion with the gods. There are said to be 1600, 1800 gods, and these numbers are mentioned in the prayer of the Kanòdrs dairy and in the legends. The numbers are probably used in the way in which we should use the word 'infinite,' but there must be some reason why they should have been chosen. 776 801

The number 18 occurs in another connexion in the rule that the *palol* should perform a certain ceremony after eighteen years of continuous office. 801

I have one possible clue to the choice of the number eighteen. The Todas say that a species of Strobilanth growing on the Nilgiris as a shrub only flowers once in eighteen years. They call this shrub *pùvkat*, and it was in flower during the year of my visit. Albert, my interpreter, had only seen it in flower once or twice, but had not paid special attention to the duration of the flowering period. The number of times that several Todas had seen the flowers agreed approximately with their probable ages. Thus, Kutadri saw the flowers in 1902 for the third time, having seen them for the first time when he was twelve years old. This would make his age forty-eight, which seemed from other sources of information to be 824 801 805

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

801 824 805 approximately correct. The Todas use the flower as a record of age, and some Todas are reputed to have seen the flowers seven times, which, taking five years as the age when they were first seen, would make them over 110 years.

There is another Strobilanth called *tirparikat* which is said to flower every twelve years, and another every six. I do not know of any confirmation of the flowering periods of these plants except the last, which probably refers to *Strobilanthes sexennis*.

Whether the Toda belief in the eighteen-year period of the plant they call *pïvkat* is correct or not, it seems probable that it may have furnished the suggestion for the special position taken by the number eighteen in Toda lore.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

161 seems at present to exist may be due, wholly or in part, to
847 the diminution of infanticide.

There is one indication that female infanticide has almost
163 entirely ceased during the last five years, and even that there may now be an excess of female births. In the table of ages given on page 469, it will be seen that the pedigrees record more girls than boys of five years and under. There is no reason why my record of such young children should have been more defective for one sex than for the other, and the proportion here may be approximately correct.

TWINS

845 Twins are called *ömumokh*, and it is the custom to kill one
847 of them, even when both are boys. If they should be girls, it is probable that both would be killed, or, at any rate, would have been killed in the past.

There is one case of twins in the genealogies. Iraveli, the wife of Kwötuli and Nudriki (8), gave birth to twins about twelve years ago. Both were boys, and I was first told that one had died shortly after birth, but later inquiries made it almost certain that the boy had been killed. Some time after the birth of the twins, one of the buffaloes of Kwötuli and Nudriki is said to have had a calf with one body, two heads, and four legs. The buffalo died before the calf was born, and the monstrosity was found by the Kotas, to whom the body was given. It was generally expected that something would happen to Kwötuli or Nudriki, but they have since been very prosperous.

THE DETERMINATION OF AGE

805 This is a suitable place to say a word about the method I
128 adopted to ascertain the ages of the Todas. Like all people at a low stage of culture, the Todas are very uncertain about their ages, though their knowledge is more accurate than that of many peoples. Every Toda knows, however, whether he is older or younger than another, this fact determining the

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

names and salutations they give to one another, as we shall see in the next chapter. A few of the younger men seemed to have accurate knowledge of their ages, and building up on this basis, and with a knowledge of the relative ages of the different members of the community, it became possible to arrive at estimates which probably do not deviate very widely from the correct ages; even in the case of the older people, I do not believe that my estimated ages are likely to be more than five years out in any case. As already mentioned (see p. 416), the Todas make use, in the estimation of age, of their belief in the eighteen-year period of a flower, and the ages so estimated in a few cases agreed fairly with those arrived at in other ways.

Among those now alive, it seemed that the usual time which separates the birth of two children of the same mother is about three years, and I have taken this time as the rule in estimating the ages of all those whose names are included in the genealogies. Similarly, so far as I could tell, women begin to bear children when about eighteen to twenty years of age.

The ages of the four groups given in the table on p. 474 were calculated on the assumptions that a woman had her first child when twenty years old, and that the interval between the births of two children was three years.

The oldest Toda now living is Kiugi (57). He looks an extremely old man, and is said by the Todas to be nearly a hundred years of age. There is evidence which makes it probable that he is at least eighty or ninety. Kòrs, the father of Kiugi, performed the *pursiitpimi* ceremony before the birth of Teitchi (52) (see p. 564). Teitchi's grandson, Kuriolv, is now about fifty-four years of age. When Kòrs gave the bow and arrow he may have been only a young boy, and if we assume that he was fifteen years old, that Teitchi and Pareivan had their first children when twenty years old, and that the interval between the birth of Pilzink and that of Pareivan was six years, it would make the age of Kòrs, if he were still alive, 115. If Kiugi was born when his father was twenty years old, it would make his age ninety-five. If, on the other hand, we assume that Kòrs gave the bow and arrow when

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

177 802 804 There was some reason to believe that the true Toda measure is the *ôk* (probably a contraction of *achok*) and that the Badagas brought their grain to the Todas in vessels called *kwd*. The *kwd* contained eleven of the Toda *ôk*, and hence came about the very unusual proportion between two measures.

802 In giving ages or any other period of time, the word for year, *kwòdr*, is often abbreviated to *wd*; thus *ndpoth kwòdr*, forty years, becomes *ndpothwd*.

In counting the Todas use their fingers largely and have a special method of indicating the numbers. To signify one, the thumb is placed against the tip of the little finger; for two, against the tip of the ring finger; for three, against the middle finger; for four, against the forefinger; for five, the tip of the index finger is placed over the nail of the thumb; the same position is used for six, while that for seven is the same as for four, and so on, so that when ten is reached the thumb is resting again on the tip of the little finger.

Money

177 436 The Todas use the ordinary Indian currency. In their legends and ceremonies there is frequent reference to the *panm*, or four-anna piece.

Among the coins used by the Todas at the funeral ceremonies there are many of considerable age with Arabic inscriptions, and the earlier visitors to the hills describe the Todas as possessing old Venetian gold pieces. In the legend telling how the *kaltmokh* of the Nòdrs *ti* dispersed the invading Coorgs (p. 114), the boy made use of a small gold coin called *pirpanm*, which he had in his possession.

The Calendar

805 The Todas have twelve months, each of which begins with the new moon. The first month of the Toda year is *Tai*, which begins with the new moon in October, so that this month usually includes part of October and part of November. Some of the chief Toda ceremonies, such as that of *teuthit-*

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

usthchi and the more important ceremonies of *erkumpthpimi*, take place soon after the new moon marking the commencement of this month, and these ceremonies were sometimes said to signalise the beginning of a new year. The following are the names of the Toda months, with the periods of our year to which they approximately correspond:—

Tûi	October—November
Kmisti	November—December
Kûdrl	December—January
Aîthri	January—February
Naîthri	February—March
Âni	March—April
Âthêrî	April—May
Âdi	May—June
Oothri	June—July
Purûttthi	July—August
Tudrthri	August—September
Kirdîvi	September—October.

Each month has thirty days. A record is kept of the number of days from one new moon to the full moon, and from that to the next new moon. The full moon is counted as being on the fifteenth day after the new moon, and the new moon as being on the sixteenth day after the full moon.

The Week

The names for the days of the week are as follows:—

Arvem	Sunday
Thvem	Monday
Ôm	Tuesday
Pûthvem	Wednesday
Thm	Thursday
Pîthvem	Friday
Thanivem or *Tanivem*	Saturday.

According to Schmid, who wrote in 1837, *Ôm* is regarded as the first day of the week. Schmid also notes that the names for Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday agree in etymology with Tamil, Wednesday being Buddha's day and Friday the day of Venus. He gives *Etnat* as an alternative name for Saturday.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAP. XXIII.

their motives and their action proximate and uninvolved, we have the ready means afforded us of tracing, by a comparatively short and easy road, up to first causes, and thus of acquiring an insight into human impulse, which may prove serviceable even in judging of more complicated races, and must ever be interesting to obtain.

Fortunately for the preservation of the human race, which must otherwise have become extinct, primitive tribes are greatly attached to their children. We may safely assume, therefore, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that where wholesale destruction of progeny by the parents themselves, is looked on as an obligation which has devolved on them in order to save their race from destruction—where in fact, it is largely a work of love—there the act would be performed without needless violence. In those tribes where children are killed in a heartless manner; whether by prolonged neglect or in some actively cruel method, we shall probably not be *far wrong in ascribing* such action to selfish, ignoble motives.

The following is the interesting evidence of an aged Toda, who speaks of what has been enacted under his own eyes. I give the narration very nearly in his own words;—

'I was a little boy when Mr. Sullivan[1] visited these mountains. In those days it was the custom to kill children; but the practice has long died out, and now one never hears of it.

'I don't know whether it was wrong or not to kill them, but we were very poor, and could not support our children. Now every one has a mantle—putkuli—but formerly there was only one for the whole family, and he who had to go out took the mantle; the rest remaining naked at home: naked all but the loin-cloth—kûvn.

[1] Mentioned in Chapter VIII., Note 3. The English officer who first mounted the Nîlagîri plateau, and visited the homes of the Todas. Events of Toda importance all date from the visit of Sulaivan Dore, as we quote the Christian era.

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
AW60 Toda AW60

595 851 842 [805] [824] when they return to the mand. The time is determined, in the vicinity of Ootacamund, by the opening of the flowers of *Onothera tetraptera* (evening primrose), a garden escape called by the Todas āru mani pūv (six o'clock flower), which opens towards evening.* It may [765] be noted that, at the second funeral of a male, a miniature bow and three arrows are burnt with various other articles within the stone circle (azaram).

648 585 A few years ago (1902), the Todas, in a petition to Government, prayed for special legislation to legalise their marriages on the lines of the Malabar Marriage Act. The Government was of opinion that legislation was unnecessary, and that it was open to such of the Todas as were willing to sign the declaration prescribed by section 10 of the Marriage Act III of 1872 to contract legal marriages under the provision of that Act. The Treasury Deputy Collector of the Nīlgiris was appointed Registrar of Toda marriages. No marriage has been registered up to the present time.

847 178 The practice of infanticide among the Todas is best summed up in the words of an aged Toda during an interview with Colonel Marshall.† "I was a little boy when Mr. Sullivan (the first English pioneer of the Nilgiris) visited these mountains. In those days it was the custom to kill children, but the practice has long died out, and now one never hears of it. I don't know whether it was wrong or not to kill them, but we were very poor, and could not support our children. Now every one has a mantle (putkuli), but formerly there was only one for the whole family. We did not kill them to please any god, but because it was our custom. The mother never nursed the child, and the parents did

* I have seen this plant growing on the grass in front of the Pukhrs bungalow.
† *Op. cit.*